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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
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TO: Deputy Director (Intelligence)

SUBJECT: Comment on 9 September Statement of Soviet Foreign
Ministry on German Rearmament.

The statement of the Soviet Foreign Ministry on 9 September, although only a summary of previous propaganda arguments, makes clear the official Soviet opposition to any form of German rearmament. It states that "the implementation of the plans for the restoration of German militarism under any signboard will inevitably result in the conversion of Western Germany into a hotbed of a new war and indefinitely continue the existing division of Germany." Previous Soviet propaganda and official notes have said that implementation of EDC would intensify the threat of a new war and prevent German reunification. This statement extends these threats to any other form of German rearmament and is part of the strong Communist campaign which has followed the defeat of EDC to emphasize the equal danger of alternative forms of German rearmament.

The Soviet statement makes no new offer for a German settlement, but it denies that the possibilities of reaching agreement on the German problem have been exhausted. It repeats the Soviet proposal for a four-power conference on the German problem, reaffirms the need for a European security system, and pledges continued support of disarmament.

The Soviet statement--with its endorsement of a "strong and independent France"--clearly reflects Moscow's belief that France is the weakest link in Western defense planning.

The prospect of further postponement of German reunification has a definite appeal in France, but reference in the statement to the results of the Geneva conference will be seized upon by elements in all French political parties as hint that cannot be ignored.

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The Kremlin apparently does not consider it necessary at this time to make any major concession to head off German rearmament, deeming it sufficient for the moment to remind the West that German inclusion in Western defense would destroy the chances of settling basic issues.

HUNTINGTON D. SHELDON
Assistant Director
Current Intelligence



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